

THE SENTINEL



OFFICIAL SAFETY NEWSLETTER OF CIVIL AIR PATROL

Ground Team Safety

By Col William K. Lord, National Safety Officer

Spring is a great time of year to get out and do ground team training exercises. As always, we want to emphasize safety. Here are some thoughts on how you as a ground team member can keep yourself and your team members safe. First and foremost, take training seriously. This is no time for you to get involved in horseplay. Really learn the tasks being demonstrated. These skills may not be used on every mission, but you want the knowledge to be in your "toolbox" in case the need arises.

Assemble your pack and required equipment and keep it in good repair. Part of being a good team member is replenishing, repairing and repacking your kit after a mission. Replace batteries, food, clothing that is wet or dirty and anything else that is not serviceable. Make sure the boots you are wearing are already "broken in". Blisters can be painful and can get infected if not treated properly. You certainly will not be able to participate fully if your feet are hurting.

Stay current in first aid and CPR. These are skills that you can use at anytime, not just in CAP. If you have an opportunity, take a wilderness or advanced first aid class. You will learn much more and sharpen the skills you already have.

Another important issue is your physical fitness. Are you able to hike in the wilderness with a pack? Are you in good general health? Only you can answer these questions but, it is important to evaluate yourself so you do not become a victim and hinder the exercise.

Senior members, keep an eye on the cadets. Proper supervision reduces accidents and injuries. If the exercise is an overnight activity, remember to have a female senior member if any female cadets are participating.

While out in the wilderness, keep an eye on the weather. Mother Nature can be very unforgiving. Severe weather may mean you have to delay or stop your ground team training to avoid injury to members.

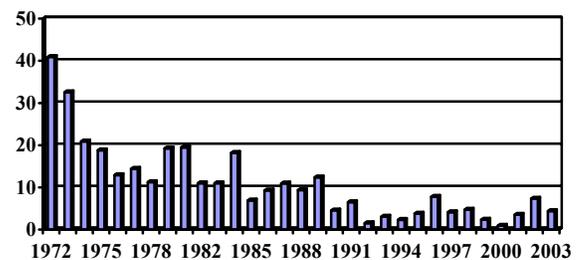
Know what the hazards are for your area and

be prepared to avoid them or reduce the risk. Are ticks, brown recluse spiders or other disease bearing insects prevalent? Is hunting season open? Is the terrain steep or heavily wooded? Put into practice Operation Risk Management (ORM). If you don't know what ORM is, visit <http://level2.cap.gov/index.cfm?nodeID=5334> and learn more. A successful ground team does not rely on "luck" or "winging" it. They rely on members who are well trained, properly equipped, in good physical health and practice safety at all times.

CAP Safety Metrics

	FY03	FY04
Aircraft Accidents	5	3
Aircraft Incidents	38	12
Fatalities	2	2
Vehicle Mishaps	16	3
Bodily Injuries	13	5
Serious Injuries	2	3

CAP's Aircraft Accident Rate Over The Years



Rate = Accidents Per 100,000 Flight Hours

Aircraft Accident Rate Comparison

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
General Aviation	7.12	7.05	6.33	6.28	6.69	6.71
AF Aero Clubs	4.39	3.90	4.08	3.01	1.10	1.22
Civil Air Patrol	4.76	2.34	0.94	3.57	7.37	4.43
US Air Force	1.13	1.14	1.08	1.16	1.62	1.30



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Van Driving Safety

By Col William K. Lord, National Safety Officer

Over the past few years, fifteen passenger vans have received greater attention due to their increased involvement in certain type of accidents. The Civil Air Patrol operates these types of vans because they are able to transport relatively large numbers of people and cargo. They are generally reliable and are considered workhorses. As with most perceived risks, we can reduce the hazard and stay safe if we are educated, prepared and trained. Let's look at what we can do to stay safe while operating these large vehicles.

Wings need to adhere to CAPR 77-1 in the issuance of CAPF 75. Drivers with risky driving history should be prevented from driving. A thorough review of the Motor Vehicle Record (MVR) should be completed every two years by the wing commander, logistics officer or transportation officer to determine eligibility to drive a corporate owned vehicle (COV).

Complete the full inspection of the van before driving. Many problems can be averted if you take the time to complete the inspection and repair or replace worn/broken items. The last place you want to be is parked on the side of the road with a disabled van and 12 or more cadets! Make sure the required first aid kit, road flares, etc. are on board. Open the kits to be sure all of the needed equipment is there and in usable condition. Tire pressure should be set to the vehicle manufacturer's recommendations. Tire blowouts have been identified as a major contributing factor in van rollovers. Proper inflation prevents uneven wear and overheating of the tires. Inspect the tires for adequate tread. No van should be operated with inadequate tread depth. Don't forget to check the spare tire. It will not do you much good if it is improperly inflated or does not have adequate tread. Keep the fuel tank as full as possible. This helps to keep the center of gravity lower, which improves handling characteristics. Refueling at each stop will help you accomplish this goal.

If it is not needed, remove the rear seat. When loading the van, fill the forward seats first and put luggage under the seats. This will reduce the rearward weight bias. No cargo should be attached to the roof of the van - this raises the center of gravity and makes the van less stable. Trailers should not be towed. These big vans require enough care and attention to operate without adding the additional weight and dynamic concerns that come with trailer towing.

No driver should drive more than two continuous hours. Changing drivers every two hours or every 100 miles is a good rule of thumb. No driver should drive more than 300 miles in one day. The front seat passenger should stay awake and help maintain the driver's alertness. Passengers should sit upright and use the safety belts. No lying down on the seat for a

nap. Driver distractions should be kept to a minimum. If your passengers are getting too "rowdy", find a safe place to pull over and address the problem. Maximum driving speed should be limited to 60 mph. Since large, fully loaded vans take more effort to maintain their direction and slow down less quickly than most vehicles, a conservative speed can reduce your risks. Vans have larger blind spots than most passenger cars. Do not make any sudden lane changes where you have not carefully looked in your mirrors and outside the windows for conflicting traffic.

The actual highway driving is the most potentially dangerous part of operating the fifteen passenger vans, but don't get complacent once you arrive at your destination. When backing a van in a parking area, use spotters to avoid backing into another vehicle or other stationary object. Walk completely around the van to see for yourself what dangers are present.

Fifteen passenger vans can be safe if we will recognize the special handling characteristics, the importance of proper loading and tire maintenance. Most times when we operate COVs we are carrying cadets. They are precious cargo - take your job as driver seriously and do all you can to reduce the risks.

Here are some great driving safety websites:

- AAA Foundation: <http://www.aaafoundation.org/home/>
- American Driver and Traffic Safety Education Association (ADTSEA): <http://adtsea.iup.edu/adtsea/default.asp>
- Network of Employers for Traffic Safety: <http://www.netsnational.org/index.asp>

Spring - The Season Birds Nest

During your next preflight inspection, look for the following signs that birds may have moved into your engine compartment:

- Straw around the nose gear
- Straw in engine air inlets or engine compartment
- Bird poop around the nose of the aircraft
- Bird poop on or under the prop

Don't think that just because you use inlet plugs that you're safe. These furtive fowl can enter through the cowl flap or nose gear compartment. According to those that have experienced it, flying with a bird's nest in your engine compartment not only **smells bad**, it **can do considerable damage** to the engine.

Other Safety Meeting Topics

- Learning to fly, Instrument and Mountain Flying, etc.: <http://www.weekendcfii.com/index.html>
- Older Drivers More Likely to Die in Vehicle Crashes: <http://www.aaafoundation.org/multimedia/index.cfm?button=SeniorInjury>
- Teen Sports Injuries: http://kidshealth.org/teen/safety/first_aid/sports_injuries_p2.html
- ORM University: <http://www.capnhq.gov/ormu/>